



TOOLBOX TALK



COVID-19: SYMPTOMS AND RISK REDUCTION

USING THIS TOOLBOX TALK:

This toolbox talk gives a summary of basic safety procedures and safeguards to protect employees from COVID-19. **A site-specific COVID-19 Officer (who may also be the Health and Safety Officer) should be designated for every site to assist with these measures.**

Please note: This document is not intended to replace any formalized procedures currently in place at the worksite.

To limit the spread of COVID-19, do not pass this pamphlet around for workers to sign as you do with other LHSFNA toolbox talks.

Contact the LHSFNA's Occupational Safety and Health Division at 202-628-5465 to ask questions, provide feedback or for further assistance. Additional Fund toolbox talks can be ordered at www.lhsfna.org or by calling the number above.

BACKGROUND:

The Difference Between the Novel Coronavirus & COVID-19

Coronavirus: a family of viruses, of which there are several different types. This new coronavirus, often called the novel coronavirus, is SARs-CoV-2. The disease it causes – and the symptoms associated with it – is COVID-19.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

Mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms that include:

- ▶ Fever or chills
- ▶ Cough
- ▶ Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- ▶ Fatigue
- ▶ Muscle or body aches
- ▶ Headache
- ▶ Loss of smell or taste
- ▶ Sore throat
- ▶ Congestion or runny nose
- ▶ Nausea or vomiting
- ▶ Diarrhea

These signs and symptoms can appear between 2-14 days after exposure. If you experience these symptoms while working, alert your supervisor immediately, leave work and contact your healthcare provider. **Emergency warning signs and symptoms include trouble breathing, persistent pain in the chest, confusion or sluggishness and bluish lips or face.**

IF YOU ARE SICK, HAVE BEEN EXPOSED OR SUSPECT YOU HAVE BEEN EXPOSED

Alert your healthcare provider immediately if you experience symptoms, think you've been infected with the virus or have been exposed to someone with the virus. **If you think you were exposed on the job, alert your supervisor immediately.** Follow these steps:

- ▶ Stay home except to get medical care
- ▶ Keep in touch with your healthcare provider (call ahead before visiting)
- ▶ Avoid public transportation
- ▶ Stay away from others as much as possible and practice self-isolation
- ▶ Cover your coughs and sneezes
- ▶ Practice good hand hygiene; if there is no soap and water, use hand sanitizer
- ▶ When around others, wear a facemask if one is available, including at the doctor's office
- ▶ Avoid touching your eyes, nose, mouth and face with unwashed hands

BEST PRACTICES TO REDUCE YOUR RISK FOR INFECTION

- ▶ Maintain your health by getting adequate sleep; eating a balanced, healthy diet; avoiding alcohol and consuming plenty of fluids.
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place or after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.
 - When soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol. Cover all parts of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- ▶ Avoid touching your eyes, nose, face and mouth with unwashed hands.
- ▶ Avoid close contact (within six feet) with people – practice social distancing (6 feet or more apart) as much as possible.
- ▶ If COVID-19 is actively spreading in your community or workplace, avoid contact with people who are confirmed to be sick or exposed. This is especially important for people who are at a higher risk of serious health complications.
- ▶ Cover your coughs and sneezes. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow. Dispose of used tissues in the trash.
- ▶ If voluntary use of N95 respirators is allowed at work:
 - Ensure fit
 - Ensure seal
 - Only handle straps
 - Store in a bag when not in use

FAST FACT

Spreading the Disease Without Symptoms

Asymptomatic means showing no symptoms of disease. A person is considered asymptomatic if they have recovered and no longer have symptoms OR have an illness but do not have symptoms. **It's possible for people to have COVID-19, show no symptoms, and spread the disease to others.**

GENERAL ON-THE-JOB GUIDANCE TO PREVENT EXPOSURE & LIMIT TRANSMISSION OF THE VIRUS

These procedures cover all areas – including trailers, gates, equipment, vehicles, etc. – and will be posted at all entry points and throughout the site.

- ▶ Don't shake hands or engage in other physical contact.
- ▶ Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent ethanol or 70 percent isopropanol.
- ▶ Field offices, trailers and similar spaces are now considered locked down areas limited to only authorized personnel.
- ▶ Comply with all posted jobsite cleaning, disinfecting and decontamination procedures.
- ▶ Comply with a “No Congregation” or “6-Foot Rule” policy that mandates social distancing. Maintain a minimum distance of six feet from others at all times, unless the task warrants otherwise.
 - All crew meetings/toolbox talks will be held outside and follow social distancing protocols.
 - Avoid face-to-face conversations. Critical situations requiring in-person discussion should still follow social distancing.
 - Maintain social distancing during breaks and lunch. Large gathering places on site will be eliminated and replaced with small break areas with limited seating.
- ▶ Report all restroom facilities that should be cleaned or handwashing stations that must be refilled with soap, hand sanitizer and paper towels.
- ▶ Use of eye protection (e.g., safety goggles/face shields) is recommended at all times.
- ▶ When entering a machine or vehicle, if you're not sure you were the last person inside, wipe down the interior and door handles with disinfectant prior to entry.
- ▶ To avoid external contamination, we recommend everyone bring food from home. Use your own water bottle, and do not share.
- ▶ To avoid spreading the virus, please clean up after yourself. DO NOT make others responsible for moving, unpacking or packing up your personal belongings.

FAST FACT

How Is COVID-19 Treated?

No vaccine or specific treatment for COVID-19 is currently available. Hospitals can only provide supportive care.

ASSESSING SYMPTOMS PRIOR TO EACH SHIFT

Prior to starting a shift, each employee may be asked to self-certify to their supervisor that they:

- ▶ Have no signs of a fever or a measured temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater, a cough or trouble breathing within the past 24 hours.
- ▶ Have not had “close contact” with an individual diagnosed with COVID-19. “Close contact” means living in the same household as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, caring for a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, being within 6 feet of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 for about 15 cumulative minutes over a 24 hour period or coming in direct contact with secretions (e.g., sharing utensils, being coughed on) from a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- ▶ Have not been asked to self-isolate or quarantine by their doctor or a local public health official.

Workers performing tasks in a confined space or inside a closed building may be temperature screened by a medical professional or trained individual, provided that the screening is performed out of public view to respect privacy and that the results are kept private.

Employees exhibiting symptoms or unable to self-certify should be directed to leave the jobsite and seek medical attention and applicable testing by their healthcare provider. They are not to return to the jobsite until cleared by a medical professional. **If you or a family member are feeling ill, you should stay home!**

DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS

1. What should you do if you feel sick?
2. When is the “No Congregation” policy or “6-Foot Rule” in effect on the jobsite?

TAKEAWAYS

1. If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, alert your healthcare provider, your supervisor and do not come to work.
2. You can spread COVID-19 to others even if you don't have symptoms.
3. Follow good handwashing practices and the 6-Foot Rule when on site to limit your risk for being infected or spreading the virus.

Date: _____

Instructor: _____

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